

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A stud spacer for extending between two studs with each stud having an opening therein, the stud spacer comprising:
  - a main member adapted to extend between the two studs;
  - the main member including first and second end portions;
  - a projection extending from one of the end portions;
  - an opening formed in the other end portion;
  - wherein the main member includes a pair of side flanges and a pair of end flanges;
  - wherein the end flanges are adapted to be connected to the two studs that the stud spacer extends between; and
  - wherein ~~one~~ the stud spacer is adapted to be connected to another stud spacer by extending the projection of the one stud spacer through the opening within one stud and into the opening of another stud spacer.
2. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 1 including at least one flange for connecting to one of the two studs.
3. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 1 including spaced apart flanges for connecting to one of the two studs.
4. (Canceled)
5. (Canceled)
6. (Currently Amended) The stud spacer of claim ~~[[5]]~~ 1 wherein the main member includes a central section and wherein the side flanges are turned out of the plane of the central section.
7. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 6 wherein the end flanges and the side flanges are turned in opposite directions with respect to the central section.

8. (Currently Amended) The stud spacer of claim [[4]] 1, wherein at least one end flange is divided into at least two portions and wherein the projection extends between the two portions.

9. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 1 wherein the projection includes a turned tab.

10. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 9 wherein the tab is turned up with respect to the main member when the stud spacer extends between the two studs.

11. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 1 wherein the opening formed in the second end portion of the main member includes a slot.

12-20 (Canceled)

21. (Original) A stud spacer for extending between two studs comprising:

a main member adapted to extend between the two studs;

the main member including first and second end portions;

a projection extending from one end portion;

a projection receiver formed on the other end portion; and

wherein either the projection or projection receiver includes one or more locking members such that when a projection of one stud spacer is projected into the projection receiver of another stud spacer a locked condition is realized.

22. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 21 wherein either the projection or projection receiver includes one or more stops for engaging the one or more locking members.

23. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 22 wherein the locking members are disposed on the projection and the stops form a part of the projection receiver.

24. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 21 wherein at least a portion of the projection is deflectable in response to the projection engaging the projection receiver.

25-33 (Canceled)

34. (Original) A stud spacer for extending between two studs and connected to one or more similar stud spacers, comprising:

- a. a main member;
- b. the main member having opposed end portions;
- c. a projection extending from one end portion;
- d. a receiver disposed on the other end portion and adapted to receive a projection of another stud spacer; and
- e. wherein when two stud spacers are connected together the projection of one stud spacer will engage and lock with the receiver of another stud spacer.

35. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 34 wherein the projection and receiver are disposed such that when consecutive stud spacers are connected together, the projections and receivers will overlies each other.

36. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 34 wherein both the projection and receiver include a flap that is at least partially flexible.

37. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 36 wherein in a locked position, the flaps of the projection and receiver engage each other.

38. (Original) The stud spacer of claim 34 wherein both the projection and receiver include a flexible flap, a hold down element, an opening disposed between the flap and the hold down element, a deflector, and an opening disposed between the deflector and the hold down element.